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E.O. 12958: DECL: 2029/11/20

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SUBJECT: CHAVEZ VOWS TO SHOOT DOWN "SPY" PLANES

CLASSIFIED BY: Robin D. Meyer, Political Counselor, DOS, POL; REASON:
1.4(B), (D)

[¶1.](#) (SBU) In his nationally-televised weekly Alo Presidente show on December 20, President Chavez accused Colombian President Uribe of having "handed over Colombia to the yankees" and having allowed them to send unmanned aircraft into Venezuelan airspace near the Colombian border. Chavez said that a small 2-3 meter unmanned plane had been spotted around midnight a few days previously by soldiers near the Fuerte Mara military base in Zulia state. "Last night I ordered the military to shoot down any plane like this that appears. We will not allow this, nor will we allow military agents or Colombian civilian intelligence operations in Venezuela." Chavez said "the aggressions against Venezuela are growing and the preparations of the Colombian military forces, the government of Colombia, and the yankee government in Aruba and Curacao are evident. They are moving units, they are moving planes, they are using drones, they are using ... AWACS ... I have an obligation to alert the international community to the threat against Venezuela."

[¶2.](#) (C) Comment: By giving the military a blanket order to shoot down potential unmanned aircraft or "spy" planes, Chavez may be increasing the danger of an incident near the border with Colombia.
DUDDY